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FRANKLIN INSTITUTE CELEBRATES VAST SCIENTIFIC ACHIEVEMENT THE 2021 FRANKLIN INSTITUTE AWARDS VIRTUAL CEREMONY

Dr. Kizzmekia Corbett, Lead Scientist Behind Development of the Moderna COVID-19 Vaccine

*Receives Inaugural NextGen Award with an introduction by Dr. Anthony Fauci during
streaming virtual Ceremony on Thursday, April 29 at 7:00 pm*

Philadelphia, Pa. April 23, 2021—Breakthroughs in COVID-19 vaccine development, laser technology, and artificial intelligence are among the extraordinary contributions of eleven visionaries celebrated during the 2021 Franklin Institute Awards Virtual Ceremony, streaming on all platforms Thursday, April 29 at 7:00 pm ET.

How to Watch the 2021 Franklin Institute Awards Ceremony on Thursday, April 29 at 7:00 pm ET:

[2021 Virtual Awards Ceremony Live Stream | The Franklin Institute \(fi.edu\)](#)

New this year, the inaugural **Benjamin Franklin NextGen Award** established during a pivotal year in science to spotlight an emerging leader who, early in their career, has significantly raised the bar of scientific excellence through innovation and impact and is actively working to shape the future.

Leading viral immunologist **Dr. Kizzmekia Corbett** of the National Institutes of Health (NIH), at the forefront of the development of one of the first highly effective COVID-19 vaccines, receives the 2021 Benjamin Franklin NextGen Award with an introduction by NIAID Director Dr. Anthony Fauci. As one of the most highly visible African American scientists in the fight against COVID-19, Corbett, 35, led the race to develop the science that could end the COVID-19 global pandemic and is subsequently tackling vaccine hesitancy and working to build trust among communities of color.

At a time when the importance of scientific advancement and technological achievement resonates more than ever, The Franklin Institute Awards Program continues its nearly 200-year legacy of honoring the most impactful discoveries and developments and those who have made them.

[Video: Introducing the 2021 Franklin Institute Awards Laureates](#)

Eight Benjamin Franklin Medalists and two Bower Award recipients, including **Chairman of Apple Dr. Arthur Levinson** for extraordinary business leadership and **pioneer of artificial intelligence Dr. Kunihiko Fukushima** for achievement in science, which carries a \$250,000 monetary prize, will be honored.

From laying the foundation for the artificial intelligence boom to helping us understand human language, from unlocking the mechanisms behind vision to shedding light on the mysteries of forest fires, and from developing ultra-fast lasers to fighting COVID-19, the 2021 Franklin Institute Awards laureates each reflect Benjamin Franklin's trailblazing spirit.

More about The Franklin Institute Awards Program and the 2021 Laureates here:

[2021 Franklin Institute Awards Convocation Book](#)

THE 2021 FRANKLIN INSTITUTE AWARDS RECIPIENTS

2021 Bower Award and Prize for Achievement in Science

Kunihiko Fukushima, Ph.D., Fuzzy Logic Systems Institute

Citation: For his pioneering research that applied principles of neuroscience to engineering through his invention of the first deep convolutional neural network, “Neocognitron”—a key contribution to the development of artificial intelligence.

2021 Bower Award for Business Leadership

Arthur D. Levinson, Ph.D., Calico LLC, Apple Inc.

Citation: For his innovative leadership building Genentech into a global biotechnology pioneer, his strategic guidance of Apple, and his commitment to advancing human health and longevity at Calico—a distinguished career that exemplifies the spirit of scientific inquiry and entrepreneurship embodied by Benjamin Franklin.

2021 Benjamin Franklin NextGen Award

Kizzmekia S. Corbett, Ph.D., National Institutes of Health

Citation: For her outstanding contributions to the field of viral immunology and vaccine development, including an mRNA-based vaccine to combat the novel coronavirus SARS-CoV-2, the cause of the COVID-19 pandemic.

2021 Benjamin Franklin Medal in Chemistry

Roberto Car, Ph.D., Princeton University

Michele Parrinello, Ph.D., ETH Zürich, Università della Svizzera Italiana, and Istituto Italiano di Tecnologia

Citation: For inventing an efficient computational method that maps the interactions of large numbers of atoms in motion using quantum mechanics, an approach now used to describe and design diverse chemicals and materials, as well as to understand biological systems.

2021 Benjamin Franklin Medal in Computer and Cognitive Science

Barbara H. Partee, Ph.D., FBA, University of Massachusetts Amherst

Citation: For her foundational contributions that synthesize insights from linguistics, philosophy, logic, and psychology to understand how words and sentences combine to express meaning in human language.

2021 Benjamin Franklin Medal in Earth and Environmental Science

Monica G. Turner, Ph.D., University of Wisconsin-Madison

Citation: For her contributions to our understanding of how changes in large-scale patterns associated with natural processes, such as forest fires, and human activities, such as urbanization, can affect not only ecological systems but also the social and economic well-being of society.

2021 Benjamin Franklin Medal in Life Science

Jeremy Nathans, M.D., Ph.D., Johns Hopkins Medical School

Citation: For his groundbreaking research on the genetics of the visual system, including the identification of key genes involved in eye development, eye diseases, and color vision.

2021 Benjamin Franklin Medal in Mechanical Engineering

C. Daniel Mote, Jr., Ph.D., University of Maryland, National Academy of Engineering

Citation: For his outstanding contributions, through application of theory, analysis, and inventive experimentation, to the understanding of the dynamics of practical systems such as saws, skis, and conveyor belts, thereby increasing their safety, efficiency, and economy.

2021 Benjamin Franklin Medal in Physics

Henry C. Kapteyn, Ph.D. and Margaret M. Murnane, Ph.D., University of Colorado at Boulder

Citation: For their pioneering innovations that have made high-intensity sources of x-rays practical and widely available for the study of a broad range of physical processes, including chemical reactions, at the quadrillionth-of-a-second time scale.

Bank of America returns in 2021 as Presenting Sponsor of the Awards Ceremony for the 19th consecutive year. Their generous support of the Awards Program continues through the Institute's 200th anniversary in 2024.

The ceremony will be streaming across platforms, with details at www.fi.edu, and ticket packages offering a premium viewing experience are available. Every dollar raised through The Franklin Institute Awards Ceremony underwrites the Institute's efforts to make science and technology accessible and fun for visitors of all ages.

ABOUT THE FRANKLIN INSTITUTE AWARDS

Recognizing extraordinary accomplishments in science and technology since the Institute was founded in 1824, the Franklin Institute Awards remains the oldest comprehensive science and technology awards program in the United States. Honoring extraordinary individuals who shape our world through their groundbreaking achievements in science, engineering, and business, its legacy virtually charts scientific and technological advancement through the past two centuries—from the development of the typewriter to the dawn of quantum computing. The honor roll of more than 2,000 Franklin Institute Awards laureates includes Nikola Tesla, Marie and Pierre Curie, Orville Wright, Thomas Edison, Max Planck, Albert Einstein, Frank Lloyd Wright, Stephen Hawking, Gordon Moore, Jane Goodall, Elizabeth Blackburn, Steven Squyres, Bill Gates, Dean Kamen, Subra Suresh, Cornelia Bargmann, Jim Allison, and Frances Arnold. To date, 121 laureates are also Nobel Prize recipients. For more information, visit www.fi.edu/awards.

THE FRANKLIN INSTITUTE

Located in the heart of Philadelphia, The Franklin Institute is a renowned and innovative leader in the field of science and technology learning, as well as a dynamic center of activity. As Pennsylvania's most visited museum, it is dedicated to creating a passion for learning about science by offering access to hands-on science education. For more information, visit www.fi.edu.